

THIRTEEN
HISTORICAL
MARINE
PAINTINGS
BY
EDWARD MORAN
REPRESENTING
THIRTEEN CHAPTERS
OF
AMERICAN HISTORY



By THEODORE SUTRO
1905



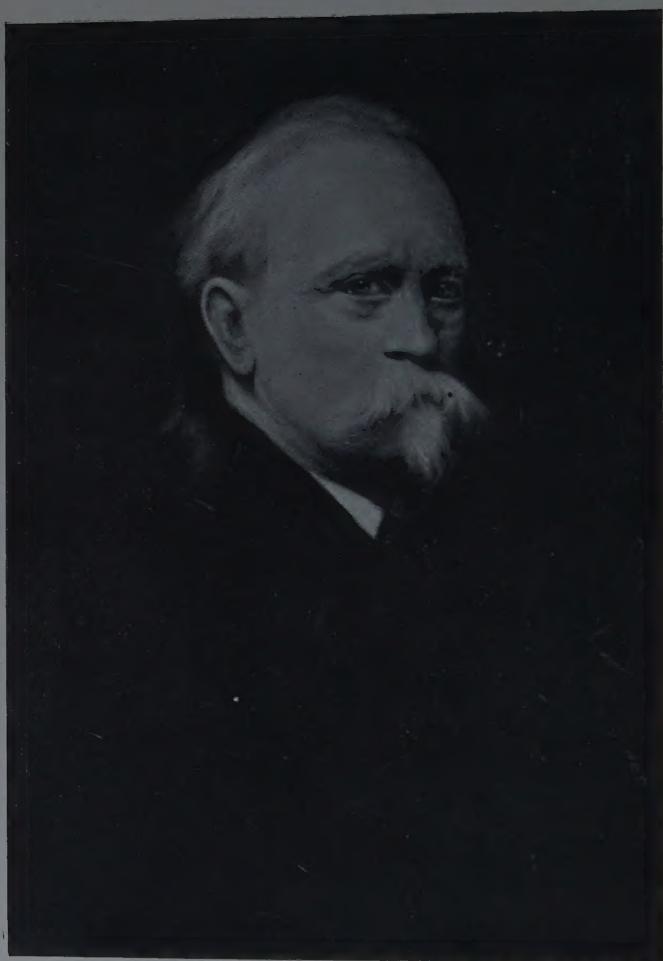
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EDWARD MORAN

From a painting by Thomas Sidney Moran

THIRTEEN CHAPTERS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

REPRESENTED

BY THE

EDWARD MORAN

SERIES OF

THIRTEEN HISTORICAL
MARINE PAINTINGS



By THEODORE SUTRO
1905

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To

My Dear Wife

FLORENCE

THROUGH WHOSE STEADFAST FRIENDSHIP FOR
MR. AND MRS. EDWARD MORAN AND LOYAL DE-
VOTION TO ME, I WAS LED TO CHAMPION, AND
ENCOURAGED TO PERSEVERE IN ESTABLISHING,
THE RIGHTS OF THE WIDOW TO THESE MASTER-
WORKS, WITHOUT WHICH THE OCCASION FOR
PENNING THESE PAGES WOULD NOT HAVE ARISEN
—THIS LITTLE WORK IS LOVINGLY INSCRIBED,

ON THE

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MARRIAGE,

OCTOBER 1ST, 1904.

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INTRODUCTORY



T. S. M.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Thirteen Paintings, to a history and description of which (and incidentally to a brief memoir of their creator, Edward Moran) these pages are devoted, are monumental in their character and importance. Mr. Moran designated them as representing the "Marine History of the United States." I have somewhat changed this title; for even the untraversed "Ocean" and the landing of Columbus in the new world represent periods which necessarily affect the whole American Continent.

The conception of these pictures was in itself a mark of genius, for no more fitting subjects could have been chosen by the greatest marine painter in the United States than the heroic and romantic incidents connected with the sea, which are so splendidly depicted in these thirteen grand paintings. That their execution required over fifteen years of ceaseless labor and the closest historical study is not surprising. The localities, the ships, the armament, the personages, the costumes, the weapons and all the incidents connected with each epoch are minutely and correctly represented, in so far as existing records rendered that possible. And yet, interwoven with each canvas, is a tone so poetic and imaginative that stamps it at once as the offspring of genius and lifts it far above the merely photographic and realistic. The series is the result of a life of prolific production, careful study, unceasing industry and great experience.

Mr. Moran himself regarded these pictures as his crowning work, and in token of his many happy years of

married life presented them, several years before his death, to his wife, Annette Moran, herself an artist of great merit, and whom he always mentioned as his best critic and the inspirer of his greatest achievements. This loving act, strange to say, gave rise to a protracted legal controversy, by reason of an adverse claim to these paintings made by the executor of the estate of Edward Moran, the final decision of which in favor of the widow, after three years of litigation, lends additional interest to these remarkable works of art. Proceedings to recover the pictures from the executor of the estate, who had them in his possession and refused to deliver them to her, were commenced on February 5, 1902, and after a trial in the Supreme Court in the City of New York lasting several days, a jury decided that the pictures were the property of the widow as claimed. On a technical point of law raised by the executor this finding of the jury was temporarily rendered ineffective, but, on an appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, this technicality was overruled and an absolute judgment awarded in favor of the widow.* This was on January 23, 1903. Still not content, the executor appealed to the highest court in the State, the Court of Appeals at Albany, which, on January 26, 1904, finally and absolutely affirmed the decision of the Appellate Division.† But even then the widow was kept out of her property on further applications made by the executor to the court. Also in this he failed, and at last, on April 28, 1904, the judgment in her favor was satisfied through the delivery of the pictures to her, as her absolute property, beyond dispute, cavil or further question.

I have deemed it proper to make this explanation, as it is through my connection as counsel for Mrs. Moran throughout this litigation that the occasion has presented

* *Moran v. Morrill*, 78 Appellate Division Reports, 440.

† *Moran v. Morrill*, 177 New York Reports, 563.

itself for this publication, and of giving to the public the opportunity to examine and enjoy, to the fullest extent, these great pictures at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

It may be added that although these paintings have occasionally been viewed by artists, they have never before been publicly exhibited as a series except for a very short period in the year 1900 in Philadelphia and in Washington. During this time they received the highest encomiums from critics and the press, and were pronounced the most notable series of historic pictures ever painted in this country. While each one of the series is a master work, it is as a group that the greatest interest attaches to them, and it was Mr. Moran's desire, and it is also that of the present owner, that they should, if possible, never be separated.

With reference to the exhibition of these paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I quote from a full page illustrated article which appeared in the *New York Herald* on Sunday, November 6, 1904, as follows:

"The exhibition of these pictures of scenes connected with the history of the United States is not only an artistic but an educational event. Edward Moran was probably the strongest marine painter of the United States. * * * No more artistically valuable and educationally instructive exhibit has been made in New York than that of these paintings of Edward Moran. It is to be hoped that the school children of the city will be taken to see and study them. The public has already testified to its appreciation of the exhibition by its large attendance."

It may be asked why the artist limited or extended the series to the number "13." This was done with a purpose. This number seems to have been interwoven in many particulars with the history of our country. The original colonies were thirteen, and also the first States; the first order for the creation of a navy was for thirteen war ships; there were and still are thirteen stripes, and

there were originally thirteen stars, on our flag; on our coat of arms a mailed hand grasps thirteen arrows, as do also the left talons of the eagle, while in its right is an olive branch with thirteen leaves; there were also thirteen rattles on the snake on the first American flag, with the motto "Don't tread on me." It was on February 13, 1778, in the harbor of Quiberon, that the American flag received its first recognition by a foreign government, an incident represented by one of these paintings; thirteen years elapsed between the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the inauguration of the first President, General Washington, in 1789; and the Louisiana purchase from France includes the area prospectively covered by thirteen States, as soon as Oklahoma and Indian Territories shall, as is now in contemplation, be admitted as one State.

This idea of thirteen is already foreshadowed in the introductory painting "The Ocean," in which thirteen gulls are seen hovering over the water, typical of the important events, linked with that number, which would occur in the misty and unknown future.

It is remarkable that although these paintings are by one man, and virtually on the same subject, they should exhibit such unusual variety, and be individually so exceptionally interesting. It has been said that historic pictures may be considered as either representative, suggestive or allegoric, but in this series of paintings all these elements are combined.

The American navy has been celebrated for its heroic achievements from the beginning, and some of these pictures recall vividly to the mind the episodes linked with the immortal names of such men as John Paul Jones, Stephen Decatur, Samuel Chester Reid, George U. Morris, John L. Worden, and the whole galaxy of heroes connected with these memorable events down to Dewey, Sampson, Schley, Wainwright and Hobson.

The production of these paintings was the result of a

patriotic and noble impulse on the part of the artist, through which he has immortalized the maritime achievements of our country, and for which we, as well as future generations, can hardly be sufficiently grateful!

“ If thou wouldst touch the universal heart,
Of thine own country, sing ! ”

BIOGRAPHICAL



T. S. M.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

Edward Moran was almost seventy-two years of age when he died in the City of New York on June 9, 1901, having been born at Bolton, Lancashire, England, on August 19, 1829. He was the oldest son of a large family of children, and when a mere child was put to work at the loom, the humble vocation of his father who, the same as his ancestors had been for several generations, was a hand-loom weaver. Already while so employed the child was frequently caught sketching with charcoal on the white fabric in his loom instead of continually plying the shuttle. Whence and how he derived this inborn talent is one of those unsolvable problems which seem to set at defiance all the accepted canons of heredity. At all events, his talent was recognized by a local village celebrity, a decorator, who guided the child, then only nine years of age, in a crude way to a development of these artistic instincts, in consequence of which it is related that he was soon able to "cut marvellous figures from paper and afterwards draw their outlines on walls and fences."

The hardship of their pursuit, offering little hope of a brighter future for their large family of growing children, induced the parents about the year 1844 to join the tide of emigration to that land of golden promise, the United States, in immortalizing whose history and in furthering whose artistic development through his glorious marine pictures, the little Edward was destined to play so important a part. The family settled in Maryland, and in the struggle for existence soon awakened

from their golden dream of a new Eldorado and returned to their old vocation. Edward again found employment at the loom, until the spirit of adventure and the desire of following the artistic bent of his mind impelled him one day, without a dollar in his pocket, to walk all the way to Philadelphia, where the boy hoped to find better opportunities. There also, however, he was disappointed, and after employment in various capacities, first with a cabinetmaker, then in a bronzing shop, and then at house painting, he finally returned to the loom at the munificent salary of six dollars per week. While so employed he attracted the attention of the proprietor, who one day surprised him while engaged in a superb drawing, stealing time for this purpose from his work. The intelligence of this man in recognizing young Moran's exceptional talent, and, as a result, advising him to quit mechanical labor, and introducing him to one of the then famous landscape painters of Philadelphia, Mr. Paul Webber, was the turning point in his career. Subsequently another artist, James Hamilton, guided him in his particular bent of marine painting, and after the usual hardships and struggle for recognition, the fate of all young artists, he finally was enabled to open a little studio in a garret over a cigar store with an entrance up a back alley. The works which emanated from there attracted such wide attention that he gradually rose to fame and fortune. His pictures were accepted by all the American academies, as well as the London Royal Academy and the Paris Salon, and he received many medals and awards. He was a member of the Water-Color Societies of this country and of London, of the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, an Associate of the National Academy of Design, also Vice-President of the Lotos Club and connected with many other artistic and social organizations and societies.

Why his artistic tastes should have been particularly

directed to marine painting can be demonstrated just as little as the possession of his extraordinary talents at all; and yet for the former a possible solution may be found in the fact that his childish imagination and predilections may have been moulded through his sea-coast experiences in old Lancashire, that picturesque maritime county of northwestern England, which is bounded on the west by the Irish Sea. At all events Edward Moran loved the sea, and this love guided every stroke of his brush in depicting his favorite element. No artist in this country, or perhaps in the world, has ever painted such water, and it was not many years after his first successes in Philadelphia that his fame spread throughout the United States, and he was easily recognized as its first marine painter. Fame and prosperity, however, did not turn his head, as they so frequently do with little men, but never with men of true genius. On the contrary, he worked with redoubled zeal and industry as he grew older, so that the number of works which he produced is marvellous.

Among his famous paintings, besides the thirteen herein described, may be mentioned the following:

- “Virginia Sands.”
- “A Squally Day off Newport.”
- “Massachusetts Bay.”
- “New York Harbor.”
- “The Yacht Race.”
- “The Battle of Svold.”
- “Philadelphia from the New Park.”
- “Minot’s Ledge Light-House.”
- “White Cliffs of Albion.”
- “Off Block Island.”
- “Return of the Fishers.”
- “Outward Bound.”
- “Low Tide.”
- “The Gathering Storm.”

“Sentinel Rock, Maine.”
“Toilers of the Sea.”
“Launching of the Life-Boat.” (1865.)
“View on Delaware Bay.” (1867.)
“Evening on Vineyard Sound.” (1867.)
“Pinchyn Castle, North Wales.” (1867.)
“Moonrise at Nahant.” (1867.)
“The Lord Staying the Waters.” (1867.)
“Coast Scene Near Digby.” (1868.)
“Departure of the United States Fleet for Port Royal.” (1868.)
“After a Gale.” (1869.)
“On the Narrows.” (1873.)

“The Commerce of Nations Paying Homage to Liberty” (1877)—the great picture which came into the possession of Mr. Joseph Drexel, the banker—an allegory suggested by the then proposed Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

“Young Americans out on a Holiday.” (1882.)
“Life-Saving Patrol: New Jersey Coast.” (1889.)
“Melodies of the Sea.” (1890.)
“South Coast of England.” (1900.)

But space forbids the complete enumeration of even his more notable works, which may be counted by the hundreds.

Mr. Moran, like all men of genius, felt his own strength, though he never overrated it; but as a result of this self-consciousness he would not brook depreciation, and when, in May, 1868, the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, of which he was a member, had hung some of his pictures in an inconspicuous and detrimental position in its gallery, he resorted to a novel expedient for showing his displeasure. On “varnishing day,” prior to the opening of the exhibition to the public, he used a mixture of beer and porter, combined with a dry light red, for the purpose of “varnishing” his paintings, but the effect

of which was that they were all coated with a beautiful opaque red substance, so that none of them could be recognized, and yet a substance which he could remove, when so inclined, without injuring the pictures at all. This called forth a storm of criticism from the "Hanging Committee" and the wiseacres of the Academy, but he was fully sustained in his course by public opinion and the press, and, instead of diminishing, it added to his fame as an artist and certainly to his reputation for the courage of his convictions.

Mr. Moran was not only a great artist, but a man of genial and companionable qualities, which endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. He, furthermore, was not only an artist who used oil, water-color and pastel with equal facility, and painted landscapes and figure pieces as well as marines, but was versatile in his talents. His musical instincts were marked, and, although self-taught, he played on a number of instruments, and he had also, through years of industrious reading and study, become thoroughly well-informed and an interesting conversationalist. He was of a most generous nature, and was not only ever ready to assist young artists with advice and material aid as well, but also, when the occasion arose, to devote the fruit of his labors to any meritorious charitable object. Thus, for example, in March, 1871, he exhibited in Philadelphia seventy-five of his landscapes and marines, all of which he used in illustrating a beautiful catalogue entitled "Land and Sea," and not only gave the entire profits of this exhibition and of the sale of the catalogue, but also the price obtained for one of his important paintings, entitled "The Relief Ship Entering Havre," to aid the sufferers of the Franco-Prussian war.

He did not reach the culminating point of excellence in his work in middle life or shortly thereafter, like so many other painters, but on the contrary grew in breadth and power with advancing years, so that the Thirteen

Historical Paintings, described in this little book, although he gave them the finishing touches only shortly before his death, constitute his greatest achievement.

About the year 1872 Mr. Moran sought a still wider field for his activities in removing from Philadelphia to the City of New York, where for thirty years he was a conspicuous and admired figure in metropolitan life, and in his studios, surrounded by all the luxury and comfort that prosperity could suggest, he and his talented and hospitable wife drew around them a circle of artists, authors, musicians and notable men of all classes, among whom may be mentioned actors like Joseph Jefferson, F. F. Mackay (both pupils of Mr. Moran) and Charles W. Coulcock, writers like Richard Watson Gilder and John Clark Ridpath, lawyers like Col. Edward C. James and Robert Ingersoll, art connoisseurs like Samuel P. Avery and William Schaus, sculptors like Frederic A. Bartholdi and James W. A. Macdonald, and of course a host of artists such as Edwin Abbey, Albert Bierstadt, Edwin H. Blashfield, John C. Brown, Thomas B. Craig, Hamilton Hamilton, Constant Meyer, Paul de Longpré, Henry W. Ranger, Vasili Vereschagin and Napoleon Sarony.

It may be added that Mrs. Moran's maiden name was Annette Parmentier, and that she was a Southern girl of French descent from the noted scientist Antoine Augustin Parmentier, who was the first to introduce the potato into France, for which he was decorated by Louis XVI as a public benefactor, and honored by a statue erected in his native town of Bordeaux. Mr. Moran married Annette (his second wife) in the year 1869, and under his instruction and guidance her own talent as an artist was developed, and some of her paintings, among them landscapes entitled "A Staten Island Study," "The Fisherman's Return," and other pictures, were not only exhibited and greatly admired, but were deemed of sufficient importance to be reproduced by prominent art publishers. She sur-



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MRS. EDWARD MORAN

(NÉE ANNETTE PARMENTIER)

From a painting by Thomas Sidney Moran

vived her husband by about three and one-half years, having died, at an advanced age, in the City of New York on November 7, 1904.

In his art Mr. Moran followed mainly the bent of his own genius, though if he was influenced by any other artists to any extent it was by Clarkson Stanfield and Turner, whom he greatly admired and many of whose pictures, for the sake of practice, he copied. He was undoubtedly also influenced in a general way, as are all eminent artists, by studying the master works of the world in Europe, where for that purpose he spent some time in the year 1861 and again in 1878 and also in subsequent years.

Of Edward Moran it may be truly said that he is another notable example of the fact that true genius is not baffled or impaired through adverse circumstances or the most humble beginnings, but soars ever upward and onward until it achieves its mission, and compels the recognition and admiration of the world, to which it is entitled.

DESCRIPTIVE
AND
EXPLANATORY

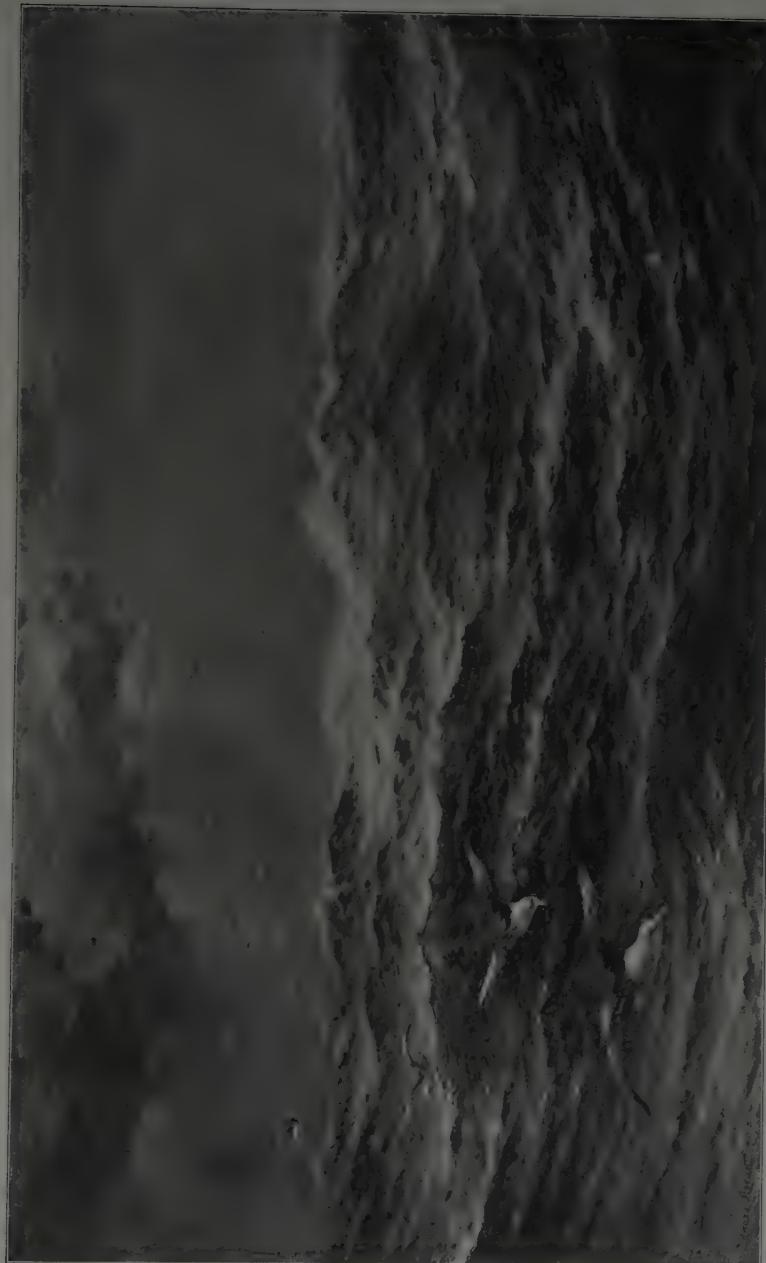


T. S. M

THE OCEAN

The Highway of All Nations

Copyright, 1888, by Edward Moran.



DESCRIPTIVE AND EXPLANATORY.

I.

THE OCEAN—THE HIGHWAY OF ALL NATIONS.*

This picture has already been briefly referred to, and is considered by some critics the greatest of the thirteen. Probably no such sublime ocean has ever been painted. How thoroughly it appeals to those who best know the sea is illustrated by the blunt but expressive compliment bestowed upon it by Admiral Hopkins of the English navy when, in 1892, he saw it in the Union League Club of New York, where it was being privately shown. After silently studying it for some minutes he turned to Mr. Joseph H. Choate, whose guest he was, and said: "I have always believed that only an Englishman could paint the sea, but it seems that I had to come to America to look upon the most almighty sea that I have ever beheld on canvas."

Admiral Hopkins was not aware that, in this, he was in fact complimenting one of his own fellow-countrymen, though, in truth, Mr. Moran had become an American of Americans through his patriotic ardor and long residence here.

In this painting the powers of Mr. Moran as an artist were tested to the utmost. For while others have at-

* Size of canvas: nine and one-half feet in length by six and one-quarter feet in height.

tempted to paint the sea, among whom Turner stands pre-eminent, few have ever succeeded in depicting it on so large a scale, without a single other object to disturb the aspect excepting only the thirteen sea-gulls hovering over its surface, which through their number suggest the whole series of these paintings and the interesting events connected with the marine history of the United States.

This picture is the largest of the series. Not only the water but the sky in this painting is superb, with the faint shimmer of the sunlight breaking through the clouds. The color is that peculiar green gray, which is the most fascinating hue known to the sea, and only present when the sky is overcast. The water and the motion of the waves are grand beyond comparison—an actual living, moving, foaming mass and as seen in mid-ocean. The conception of this painting as introductory to the whole series is most poetic. It suggests the deep, dark, dreaded, unknown waste of waters which was shrouded in mystery for thousands of years until a few daring seamen, first the Norsemen, and then Columbus with his little band, undertook the perilous task of lifting the veil. Its unexplored expanse naturally and logically preceded every voyage of discovery and is the keynote of all the marvellous achievements which subsequently constituted it the link between America and the Eastern world. It also typifies the greatest of all republics, which was to spring up beyond its westernmost limits, for nothing is so free, unfettered and seemingly conscious of its own strength and possibilities as the mighty ocean.

This painting may be likened to the opening stanzas of an epic poem, in which the theme of the story is foreshadowed, and no grander epic was ever written than is depicted in these thirteen mighty paintings, of all those qualities of heroism and adventure which have ever been thought worthy of commemoration in song or story.

How well the 'amous stanzas of Lord Byron, in Childe

Harold's Pilgrimage, illustrate the thoughts suggested by this "Ocean" of Edward Moran:

" Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

* * * * *

" Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeyeth thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone."

LANDING OF LIEF ERICKSON
in the New World in 1001



Copyright, 1898, by Edward Moran.

II.

LANDING OF LIEF ERICKSON IN THE NEW WORLD, IN 1001.*

While the most notable occurrence in its influence on America was undoubtedly the landing of Columbus, as it resulted in the gradual colonization and development of the whole continent, the actual discovery of the new world was made ages prior to 1492. The landing of Lief Erickson was made in 1001, but there is good reason to believe that even long prior to that time either the shores or the islands of America were reached by Phoenicians, Irish and Basques, and its western shores by the Chinese. The earliest discovery, however, of which there is any authenticated record is that by the Eirek (Erick) family of Iceland, and these records are not only embraced in the Sagas or histories of the Scandinavian chieftains, but more especially in the "Codex Flataeensis," completed in 1387. According to these, Eirek the Red founded colonies in Greenland about the year 985, which prospered for over four centuries. Remains of buildings and contemporaneous writings establish this beyond a doubt. These colonies became Christianized and established churches, monasteries, and had bishops in regular succession for about two hundred and fifty years. There is nothing marvellous about this account, as Greenland was only about two hundred miles distant from Iceland, and therefore nearer to that island than the latter was to Norway, whence the Icelanders originally came. These

* About six feet long by about three and one-half feet high.

colonies became practically extinct in the fourteenth century, owing, it is believed, to enormous accumulations of ice on the coast, which prevented intercommunication between them and Iceland, and cut off their chief food supplies. They may also have been decimated through the great pestilence called the Black Death, which prevailed in 1349, especially in the northern countries; while, if any remained, they are supposed to have been killed by the Esquimos, or Skraelings, as they were then called, and who were a far more powerful race than the Esquimos of to-day.

The foothold thus gained by the Norsemen in Greenland led to voyages southward. Some years after the establishment of these colonies one Bjarne Herjulfson was on one of these voyages driven by a storm far south of Greenland and saw the coast of the main continent of North America, somewhere, it is supposed from his description, between Newfoundland and Nantucket. Without landing, he returned to Greenland, whence soon thereafter, induced by his accounts, Leif, the son of Eirek the Red, undertook the same journey with a single ship and about thirty-five men, for the purpose of obtaining possession of the newly discovered country. He landed probably at Nantucket Island, and settled in the vicinity of the present Fall River, and called the country Vinland on account of the grape-vines which grew there in profusion.

In confirmation of the claim that it was in this locality that Leif Erickson first set foot, the Norse records are relied upon, which state that, at the season when this discovery was made, the sun rose at 7:30 A.M. and set at 4:30 P.M. This astronomical observation would locate the place of landing on the southern coast of New England in the vicinity mentioned. That the Norsemen made a settlement in this country, though only of brief duration, is a fact in support of which many

learned treatises have been written, dealing, among other things, with what are supposed to be Icelandic inscriptions discovered in that section of the country, and the like, a consideration of which, however, would be beyond the scope of this writing.

Leif, the son of Eirek, or to preserve the nomenclature of the artist, Lief Erickson, is described in the Sagas and other records as a large, strong man, of imposing appearance. The ships in which voyages were made by the Norsemen in those days were called drakkars, which were propelled both by oar and sail; at the ends rose wooden apartments called kastals. All the parts out of water were fashioned after the manner of monsters or drakkars (dragons, *Drachen*). The prow of the ship represented the terrible head, the sides, a continuation of the body, and the rear, the tail of the monster bent upward; they bore a single sail covered with warlike paintings, and to the mast were also frequently hoisted the coats of arms of various chiefs. It was in ships of this character that these bold seamen braved the perils of the ocean, and it was in similar ships that William, the Conqueror, came to England; and yet even these vessels, frail as they were, were superior, both in seaworthiness and size, to the ships of Columbus.

The costumes of the Norsemen consisted of trousers, belt, shirt, and often a coat of mail, and over the shoulders they sometimes wore a cloak with a fringe or border at the sides. They carried swords with most elaborately carved and embossed hilts and scabbards of gilt bronze and silver.

To depict the first landing of Lief Erickson amid these surroundings was the object of the painter. How well he has succeeded, a mere inspection of this canvas will at once reveal. The heroic figure of Lief, himself, dreamily and yet with wonderment, looking out upon the newly discovered shore, while with uplifted sword his men are

apparently consecrating the new world with a solemn vow of loyalty, some standing on a small boat which is being pushed towards the shore, while others stand knee-deep in the shoal water—the form of the ship or drakkar in the background, the costumes, swords and all the other accessories—constitute a striking and fascinating group. It portrays vividly the solemnity of the occasion when the first white men were about to set foot on the American continent.

The discovery of Vinland and its subsequent colonization by Thorfinn are referred to in the beautiful verses of Bayard Taylor, written on the occasion of his visit to Iceland to attend its millennial celebration, in August, 1874.

“ We come, the children of thy Vinland,
The youngest of the world’s high peers,
O land of steel, and song, and saga,
To greet thy glorious thousand years.

“ Across that sea the son of Erik
Dared with his venturous dragon’s prow ;
From shores where Thorfinn set thy banner
Their latest children seek thee now.

* * * * * * * * * * *
“ What though thy native harps be silent?
The chord they struck shall ours prolong ;
We claim thee kindred, call thee mother,
O land of saga, steel and song ! ”

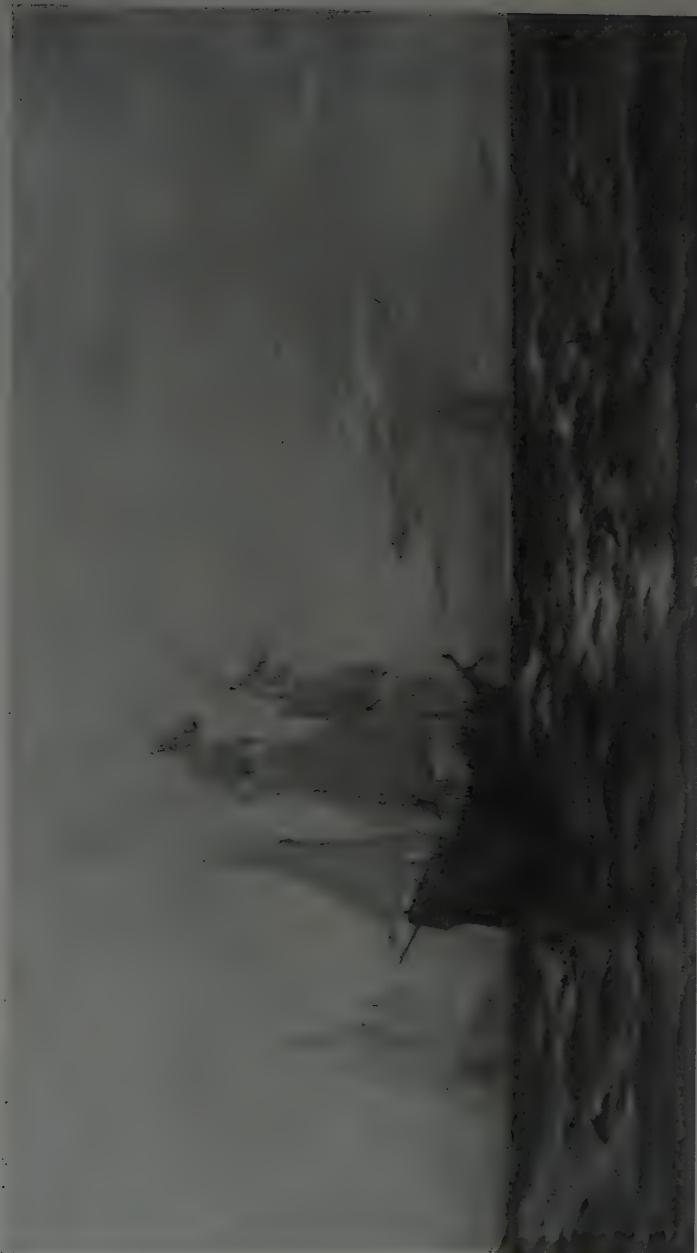
THE SANTA MARIA, NIÑA AND PINTA

(Evening of October 11, 1492)



THE DEBARKATION OF COLUMBUS

(Morning of October 12, 1492)



Copyright, 1898, by Edward Moran.



Copyright, 1898, by Edward Moran.

III.

THE SANTA MARIA, NIÑA AND PINTA (EVENING OF OCTOBER 11, 1492) *

AND

IV.

THE DEBARKATION OF COLUMBUS (MORNING OF OCTOBER 12, 1492).†

The landing of Columbus was an historical event of such importance in its consequences that the artist wisely celebrates it in both of these pictures.

We little realize what it meant to brave the perils of the unexplored ocean in the year 1492. We marvel when some adventurous navigator, even now, when every current and wind of the ocean have been observed for five hundred years, and are accurately known and precisely charted, undertakes to cross it in a somewhat diminutive vessel. What, then, must have been the courage of Columbus, when, at the advanced age of fifty-seven, he ventured with his crew upon this perilous undertaking in three frail barks or caravels, the largest of them equipped with a single deck and a single bridge, with an awkward one-story compartment at the prow and a two-story compartment at the stern, and the two others without any

* Eight feet long by four and one-half feet high.

† Four and one-half feet long by three feet high.

deck at all, with their little masts carrying awkward, unwieldy, partly square and partly lateen sails!

The three crews consisted of only one hundred and four men combined, of which fifty were on the little "Santa Maria," which was only about sixty-three feet over all in length, with a fifty-one foot keel, twenty foot beam, and a depth of ten and one-half feet, under the command of the "Admiral" himself, as he was pompously called, and thirty on the still smaller "Pinta," under the command of "Captain" Martin Alonso Pinzon, while the still more diminutive cockle-shell "Niña" contained the formidable crew of twenty-four under the command of the brother of Martin Alonso, the redoubtable "Captain" Vincente Yanez Pinzon. And then to think that, instead of being encouraged and lauded for his enterprise, the prelude consisted of discouragement, derision and persecution of the foolhardy seaman who dared to brave the superstitions of the age and the unknown ocean which was supposed to be peopled with demons and monsters, in quest of what was believed to be an absolutely impossible pathway to China and the East Indies, and from which there could not be any hope of return. A model of these caravels was exhibited in the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, in 1893, at the sight of which wonder grew to incredulity that, under such circumstances as surrounded this first voyage of Columbus, any one should have risked his life in such a craft.

Even assuming with John Fiske that the spherical form of the earth was known long before Columbus, and that he derived his knowledge of the existence of the westernmost shore of the Atlantic Ocean through information which he received of the voyages of the Norsemen, on his visit to Iceland in 1477, his opinion that the same shore might be reached by crossing the Atlantic, where it had never been traversed before, was based upon mere surmise. No wonder that his crew were disheartened

and on the verge of open mutiny when, under such circumstances, after about sixty-nine days had elapsed since they had sailed from Palos on August 3, 1492, they had still not reached the longed-for land. What faith, almost inspired, must have been his, that he should succeed in persuading his men to hold out only a few days more, and how strange that on the very next day, the seventieth of his voyage, on the evening of October 11, 1492, the long-wished-for goal should be descried in the dim distance, and that on the following day they should actually disembark from their floating prisons to stand once more upon solid ground!

The artist has chosen the inspiring moments of these two events to immortalize them in these two pictures: in the one, the three tiny barks in the shadow of the evening, still in the gloom and uncertainty of what the morrow would bring forth—and then, in the other, the brilliant spectacle of Columbus with cross uplifted, in magnificent regalia of scarlet and gold and purple, and his officers with the standards of Castile and Leon, and the white and green colors of the expedition, disembarking with his men when his hopes had become a reality, for the purpose of claiming the newly discovered land.

I quote from Emilio Castellar the following description of the events illustrated by these pictures:

“ Land! land! the cry fell as a joyous peal upon the ears of these mariners who had given themselves up as lost and doomed to die in the fathomless vast.

“ When Columbus heard the glad cry he knelt in rapture on the deck and with clasped hands lifted his joy-filled eyes to Heaven and intoned the ‘ Gloria in Excelsis ’ to the Author of all things.

“ The signs of land now made it high time to prepare for the debarkation for which all measures had been wisely planned by the admiral, who had never doubted the realization of his predictions.

“ Each moment brought a revelation. A solitary, half-tamed turtle-dove flew near them and was followed by a floating, leafy reed.

“ About two in the morning of October 12th, amid the sheen of the stars and phosphorescence of the sea, one of the crew, with eyes accustomed, like some nocturnal creature, to the darkness, cried ‘ Land! land! ’

* * * * *

“ Columbus donned his richest apparel, upon his shoulders a cloak of rosy purple, and grasped in one hand the sword of combat and in the other the Redeemer’s cross; then, disembarking, he knelt upon the land, and, with uplifted arms, joined with his followers in the Te Deum.”

In these paintings much is left to the imagination, which renders them all the more beautiful and poetical, although also in them the artist has accurately portrayed the caravels, costumes, figures and indications of the nearby shore, so that the scenes are vividly brought to mind as actually described in the journals of the great navigator himself and his first biographer, his own son Ferdinand.

It is not the purpose of the author to write history, and yet how tempting, in the study of these pictures, is it to reflect upon and recall the romance which surrounds the whole life of Columbus and his period: the honors which he received on his return to Spain, his subsequent two additional voyages of discovery, when, to those of the first, consisting of San Salvador, Cuba, and the other islands, he added that of the continent of South America; how he returned from his third voyage in chains and afterwards died in poverty and forgotten at Valladolid, on May 20, 1506, his name scarcely mentioned at the time in the records of that town; how still stranger that

Columbus never knew that he had discovered a new continent, but believed that, as he had originally intended, he had reached the shores of the Indies and China or Cathay by a new route, and therefore gave them the name which has ever since attached to the islands where he first landed, of the West Indies, and called the natives, Indians ; and, strangest of all, that four hundred and six years after he first landed at San Salvador, the remains of the great discoverer should have been transferred from the cathedral at Havana to Spain, the scene of all his triumphs and all his sorrows, on September 24, 1898, just about the close of the Spanish-American war, which is celebrated in the last or thirteenth of this remarkable series of paintings.

The courage, faith and fortitude of Columbus in persisting in his westward journey, in full confidence that he would eventually reach the shore which must ever have been pictured in his mind, in spite of the doubts and fears and protestations of his weary crew, are beautifully and concisely expressed in the stanzas of Friedrich Schiller : *

“ Brave sailor, steer onward ! Though the jester deride
And the hand of the pilot the helm drops in fear ;
Sail on to the West, till that shore is descried
Which so clearly defined to thy mind doth appear.

“ Follow God’s guiding hand and the great silent ocean !
For the shore, were it not, from the waves it would rise.
With genius is nature linked in such bonds of devotion
That what genius presages, nature never denies.”

* It is difficult to preserve the full beauty of the original of these concise verses in a translation ; but in attempting this I have found it quite as easy to rhyme them as to reproduce them simply in the blank verse of the original, in which rhymes occur in only two lines.

MIDNIGHT MASS ON THE
MISSISSIPPI

Over the Body of Ferdinand de Soto

1542



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Edward Moran

V.

MIDNIGHT MASS ON THE MISSISSIPPI OVER THE BODY OF FERNAND DE SOTO, 1542.*

As simple, gloomy and severe as were the circumstances surrounding the departure of the expeditions of Lief Erickson and Columbus, and subsequently of Henry Hudson and the Pilgrim Fathers, so brilliant, hopeful and coveted was the journey of Fernando De Soto, when he set sail from Spain in April, 1538, to conquer Florida and in search of a new Eldorado. Having previously returned from the conquest of Peru, as the chief lieutenant of Francisco Pizarro, possessed of great wealth, and through his marriage with the beautiful Isabella Bobadilla affiliated with the highest nobility, and having been appointed Governor of Cuba by Charles V.—the flower of the Spanish and Portuguese aristocracy flocked to his standard. The seven large and three small ships, including his flag-ship, the "San Christoval," in which the expedition set sail, were fitted out with great splendor. De Soto was then forty-two years of age, having been born at Xeres, Spain, in 1496, while his followers were mostly young men, and a more gorgeous or joyous company cannot be imagined. With them went the wife of De Soto and many other beautiful women, and the voyage was one round of pleasure and festivities. After landing and wintering in Cuba he started from there in May, 1539, with a following of one thousand men in nine ships, leaving the administration of Cuba in the hands of his

* About four feet long by two and one-half feet high.

wife and the Lieutenant-Governor. The original splendor was preserved, the leaders being clad in gorgeous armor and, followed by a host of servants and priests, they took with them all manner of live stock, cattle, horses, mules, etc., and were provided with all sorts of weapons and trappings, but also, significantly, with blood-hounds, handcuffs and iron neck-collars. Thus they landed in Florida, in the neighborhood of Tampa Bay, and began their march northward in the month of June, 1539, the cavaliers to the number of one hundred and thirteen on horseback, and the rest on foot. They passed the winter near the present Georgia border, and in the spring of 1540 reached the location of the present city of Savannah. Instead of pacifying, they alienated the natives through many acts of hostility, in the exuberance of their youth and prowess, in consequence of which many members of the expedition were killed in battle and others died through sickness and deprivation. Nevertheless, they pushed on still further westward towards the Rocky Mountains, and in May, 1541, discovered and crossed the Mississippi River near Lower Chickasaw Bluff, a little north of the thirty-fourth parallel of latitude, in Tunica County, in what is now the State of Mississippi. On again reaching the Mississippi on the return march, De Soto, in consequence of the exposure and hardships to which he had been subjected, sank down with a fever from which he died on May 21, 1542. Owing to the awe which he had inspired in the minds of the natives it was deemed wise by the remnant of his followers to conceal the fact of his death. Accordingly at the dead of night he was wrapped in a flag, in which sand had been sown, and taken in a boat to the middle of the river, and amid the glare of torches, the chanting by the priests of the midnight mass, and his sorrowing and silent companions, solemnly consigned to the depths of the great river.

It is this solemn moment which the artist has caught

in the painting bearing the above title. As in all the other pictures he has, also in this, depicted all the important details of the occasion without descending to such minute particularity that the painting would lose its poetic character. The sad scene recalls vividly to the mind—in contrast with the high hope and magnificent display of the expedition at its start—the futility of human ambition.

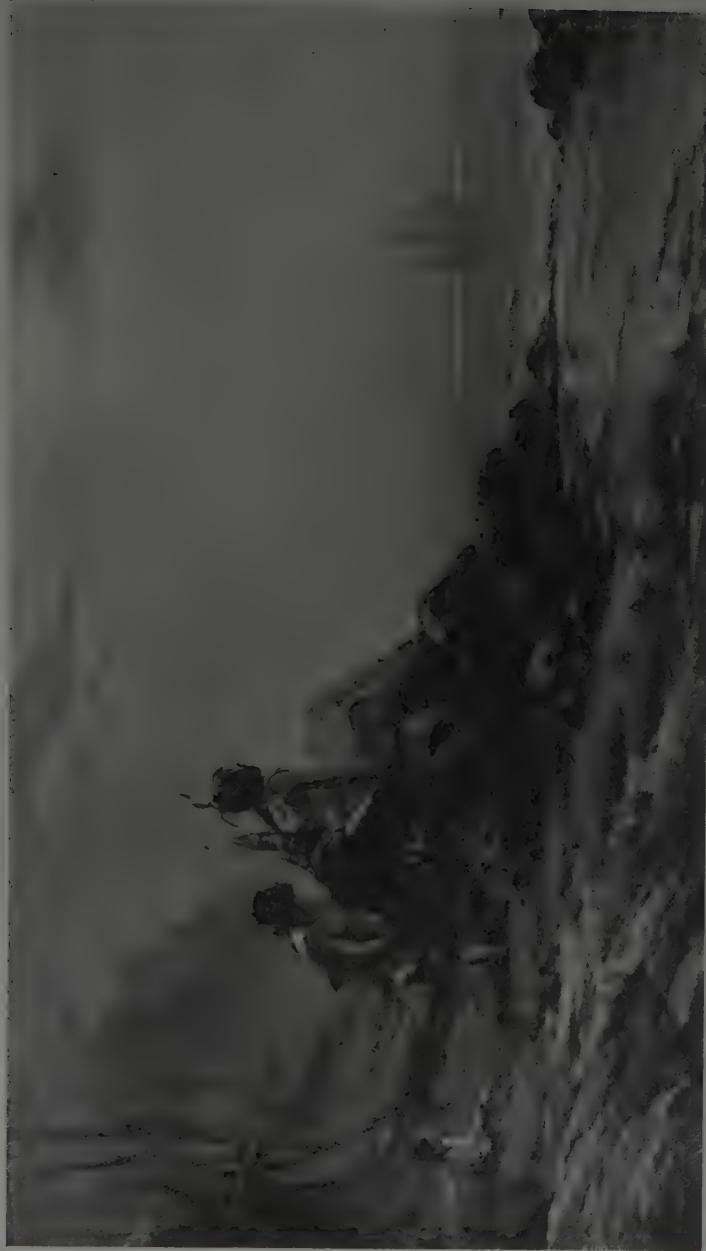
The tone of the picture is heightened through the mingling of the pale moonlight with the lurid reflection from the torches, and the coloring altogether is such that it is in perfect harmony with the occasion.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the subsequent fate of the remnant of the expedition, except, perhaps, to say that the picture itself gains in interest by contemplating that, after wandering through the pathless forests, wading swamps, swimming rivers and fighting Indians all the time, and deprived of their leader, and after four years of hardships from the time that the expedition set out, those who were left made their way to Mexico. In the meantime the beautiful wife of De Soto had died broken-hearted, and never was there, all in all, a more tragic ending to an expedition commenced amid so much pomp and glory and with such sanguine expectations. His longed-for Eldorado was not found, and yet De Soto, not unlike Columbus, gained immortality more surely than if his expectations had been realized; for the Father of Waters, the greatest river in the world, will always be associated with his name, and the acquisition of the vast province of Louisiana by Spain led the way for its subsequent transfer to the United States. It was on April 30, 1803, that through the negotiations conducted by James Monroe and Robert Livingston the Province of Louisiana was purchased for the sum of about \$15,000,000 from France, which nation had prior thereto acquired it from Spain.

In view of the chapters of history which a contemplation of this picture recalls, it is of particular interest during this year (1904), when through the magnificent Louisiana Purchase Exposition we are celebrating the centennial anniversary of the acquisition by the United States of the vast territory, which before De Soto and his followers the foot of white man had never trod.

HENRY HUDSON ENTERING NEW YORK BAY

(September 11, 1609)



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VI.

HENRY HUDSON ENTERING NEW YORK BAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1609.*

Previous to his discovery of the Hudson River, Henry Hudson, an Englishman, sometimes erroneously called Hendrick Hudson because the ship in which he sailed was fitted out under the auspices of the Dutch East India Company and the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce, had made three voyages to find a northwest passage to China and India. To reach those shores *via* the Atlantic seems to have been the goal of all the early discoverers, including Columbus and also De Soto, who, before his Florida expedition, had explored the coast of Central America, on the Pacific Ocean, in search of a passage through the American continent; and even Hudson sailed up the Hudson River in the expectation that it would lead on to the Pacific Ocean and thus to Asia. Hudson was not the only Englishman who had received encouragement and assistance from Holland when his own land had failed him, the same as did the Pilgrims soon thereafter, when they sought refuge in that enlightened and enterprising country.

He sailed from Amsterdam on April 6, 1609, in a clumsy, two-masted craft with square sails called the "Half Moon," a Dutch galiot of only ninety tons, with a crew of twenty men, in an extreme northwesterly direction, but being driven back by the ice, skirted along the

* About eight feet long by four and one-half feet high.

Atlantic coast, passing through Casco Bay, Maine, as far south as Chesapeake Bay, and thence again northward, and entered Raritan Bay, south of Staten Island, on September 11, 1609, into the present harbor of New York, and, on September 14th, sailed up the Hudson River almost as far as Albany.

The return voyage down the Hudson to its mouth, owing to adverse winds, occupied eleven days, and on November 7, 1609, he landed at Dartmouth, England, where, owing to the jealousy of the English Government, the crew was detained and his ship seized, although she had borne the Dutch flag and Hudson had claimed the sovereignty of the soil for that country over that portion of the American continent which he had discovered. It was to all intents and purposes a discovery, as the first definite historic account of the existence of this part of the new world dated from this voyage, of which he kept a careful journal, however probable it may be that, before him, other Europeans had looked upon Manhattan Island and the Hudson River, in view of the many expeditions to America during the long period from the tenth to the seventeenth centuries.

The discovery of Hudson led almost immediately to numerous trading voyages, and thereafter to temporary, and then to regular and permanent colonization, and finally to the foundation of the great City of New York. Also with Hudson, the same as with Columbus and De Soto, is thus linked a discovery far greater in its consequences than if he had succeeded in reaching the goal which he originally set out to find. Like theirs, also his ending was sad and tragic, for on a subsequent north-western voyage, his mutinous crew cast him, together with his son and seven of his faithful men, adrift amid the ice of Hudson Bay, which bears his name, thus like De Soto perishing in the very waters which he had discovered.

His life is wrapt in mystery; nothing is known of it except during the four years occupied with his voyages (1607 to 1611), and that he was probably the son of Christopher Hudson, one of the factors of the Muscovy Company. There is not even an authentic portrait of him in existence.

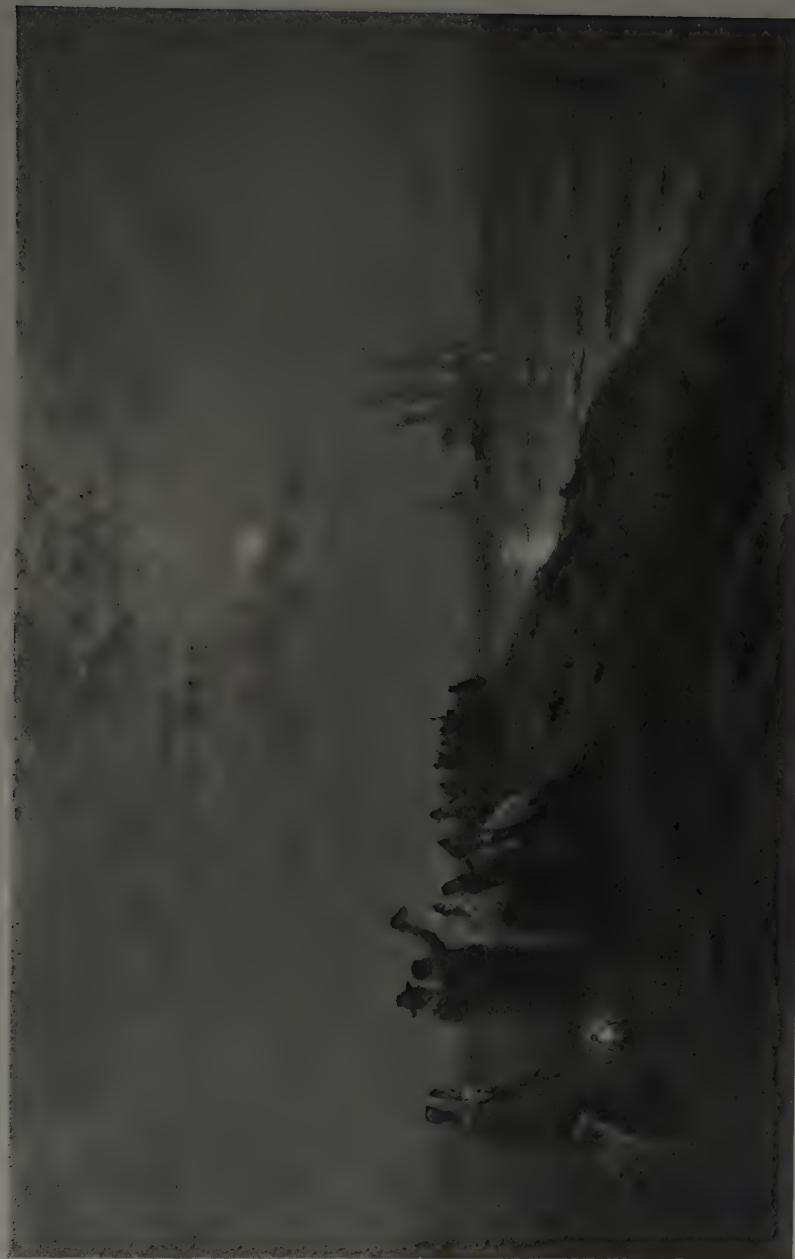
The interest of this painting centers in the scene, which it vividly depicts, of the effect upon the natives of this first sight of a ship. Nothing could be more intense than the expression of mingled fear and defiant surprise portrayed in the face and attitude of the young Indian warrior, that so strange an object should dare to approach his hitherto undisputed domain of the shore. This interest is heightened through the grouping of the squaw and Indian dog, with the Indian hut or tepee in the background on the edge of the forest, and the rocky shore in the foreground. The ship itself is subordinated to the representation of this idea, being only dimly seen in the distance.

Through this conception, the artist was enabled to present a picture which adds to the variety of the series, and at the same time demonstrates his surpassing mastery of figure and landscape painting as well.

EMBARKATION OF THE PILGRIMS

From Southampton

(August 5, 1620)



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VII.

EMBARKATION OF THE PILGRIMS FROM SOUTHAMPTON, AUGUST 5, 1620.*

A sadder journey than that of the Pilgrims, both in its inception in leaving home and kindred and fleeing from persecution, and in its ending in the inconceivable hardships which they had to endure in the new world, was probably never undertaken than when, on August 5, 1620, the "Mayflower" sailed out of the harbor of Southampton.

It must have been with heavy hearts and the gloomiest forebodings, and yet buoyed up with the hope of finding a permanent refuge beyond the ocean, for the exercise of that freedom of conscience for which they had previously found only a temporary abode at Leyden, Holland, that the hundred brave men and women, representing twenty-three different families, consigned their lives and fortunes into the hands of the crew of the little one hundred and sixty ton vessel that for almost five long months was to battle with storm and winds across the dreaded Atlantic, until on December 21, 1620, they anchored on the shores of Massachusetts, and, with that spirit of loyalty, still, to the land from which they had fled, named the spot where they first landed, Plymouth Rock, to which they had been driven in the stress and storm, instead of reaching the Virginia colony, for which they had set sail.

* About four feet long by about two and one-half feet high.

What that departure of the Pilgrims from England meant to those left behind on the shore at Southampton can hardly be conceived by those who, in our day, at some magnificent steamship pier, amid the strains of music and a shower of flowers, now and anon wave a farewell to their friends, perhaps bound on a pleasure tour in some leviathan of the ocean, of twenty thousand or more tons burden, and fitted up in more regal splendor than the most gorgeous palaces of the age of the Pilgrims.

It is to the sadness of this departure that the artist, in this canvas, has undertaken to give expression in the mournful group of friends on the shore, waving a final farewell and wistfully gazing at the "Mayflower," lying in mid-water and evidently waiting for the last passengers to arrive before setting sail on its perilous voyage into the mysterious darkness of the approaching night. There is a mellow gray light of evening diffused throughout this painting which is almost indescribable, with the moon casting its rays across the water, so perfectly is it in harmony with the thread of the whole story which is suggested by this inimitable picture.

I can think of no more fitting words to accompany this canvas than those of Edward Everett, in his oration at Plymouth, on December 22, 1824, on "The Emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers":

"Methinks I see it now, that one solitary, adventurous vessel, the 'Mayflower' of a forlorn hope, freighted with the prospects of a future State, and bound across the unknown sea. I behold it pursuing, with a thousand misgivings, the uncertain, the tedious voyage. Suns rise and set, and weeks and months pass, and winter surprises them on the deep, but brings them not the sight of the wished-for shore. I see them now scantily supplied with provisions, crowded almost to suffocation in their ill-stored prison, delayed by calms, pursuing a cir-

cuitous route ; and now driven in fury before the raging tempest, on the high and giddy waves. The awful voice of the storm howls through the rigging. The laboring masts seem straining from their base ; the dismal sound of the pumps is heard ; the ship leaps, as it were, madly from billow to billow ; the ocean breaks, and settles with engulfing floods over the floating deck, and beats with deadening weight against the staggered vessel. I see them, escaped from these perils, pursuing their all but desperate undertaking, and landed at last, after five months' passage, on the ice-clad rocks of Plymouth,—weak and weary from the voyage, poorly armed, scantily provisioned, depending on the charity of their shipmaster for a draft of beer on board, drinking nothing but water on shore, without shelter, without means, surrounded by hostile tribes.”

What an extraordinary coincidence it is that a Dutch slaver, laden with slaves for Virginia, should be on the ocean at the same time with the “ Mayflower,” in whose cabin was written the first charter of independence, the first American constitution, in the words following :

“ In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid ; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances,

acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

What but a reflection of these words is the memorable preamble to the Constitution of the United States, framed by the convention of 1787:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain this Constitution for the United States of America."

What a debt of gratitude we owe to the leaders of that expedition, Carver, Winslow, Bradford and Standish, who thus planted this colony in the United States, practically the first after that in Virginia—but also to the great artist who fortunately came from the shores of the same England to immortalize, through this beautiful picture, the first scene in the drama whose culmination is the establishment of the greatest republic that the world has ever seen!

"There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim-band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

"There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

“ What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith’s pure shrine!

“ Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to worship God.”

FELICIA HEMANS.

FIRST RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG

By a Foreign Government

(In the Harbor of Quiberon, France, February 13, 1778)



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VIII.

FIRST RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG BY A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT.

*In the Harbor of Quiberon, France, February 13, 1778.**

“ When Freedom, from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light.”

DRAKE.

Between the time of the landing of the Pilgrims and the event represented in this picture one hundred and fifty-eight years had elapsed. The hardy pioneers who had ventured across the ocean in considerable numbers had increased to thirteen colonies, the Declaration of Independence had been signed, the War of the Revolution was being fought, a preliminary confederation had been formed among the thirteen States, the first American Congress had met, and this, on June 14, 1777, “ Resolved that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; and the Union be thirteen white stars on a blue field,” and on the same day had

* About six feet long by about three and one-third feet high.

appointed John Paul Jones, usually known as Paul Jones, to the command of the "Ranger," who soon thereafter hoisted the new flag on board that vessel at Portsmouth. The "Ranger" set out to sea about November 1st, her battery consisting of sixteen six-pounders, throwing only forty-eight pounds of shot from a broadside, an armament which appears grotesquely lilliputian in comparison with the thirteen-inch guns, firing projectiles of over half a ton from our steel-armored battleships of to-day, which cost as much as five million dollars and are of 16,000 tons burden. With this little ship he sailed to Europe, capturing two prizes on the way, and, after touching at Nantes, sailed to Quiberon Bay, east of Quiberon, on the Bay of Biscay, a small town and peninsula about twenty-two miles south-east of Lorient, convoying some American vessels, and placing them under the protection of the French fleet commanded by Admiral La Motte Piquet. The story represented in this picture he tells in his own language in a letter to the Naval Committee, dated February 22, 1778: "I am happy to have it in my power to congratulate on my having seen the American flag for the first time recognized in the fullest and completest manner by the flag of France." He then recounts how, after preliminary communications with the Admiral, the latter thus honored the flag on February 13th, which he characterized as "an acknowledgment of American independence."

This, as well as each of the five subsequent paintings, depicts an important event in the history of our navy, and must be dear to every American heart in the incident which is thus perpetuated. The American flag is proudly displayed from the masthead and stern of the "Ranger," and the coloring is so adjusted that the flag appears to wave in the brightest light of the picture. The smoke of the booming cannon from the French fleet, the motion of the water, and the row-boats evidently plying in friendly

intercourse among the ships, the sky effect—all together combine to produce a piece of superb marine painting.

Space forbids dwelling upon the exceptional, romantic, daring and successful career of Paul Jones, who was born in Scotland on July 6, 1747, and died in Paris on July 18, 1792, the first of that long list of heroic figures which have made the history of the American navy so illustrious.

“ The man that is not moved at what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.”

COWPER.

Note.—Additional interest is lent to this canvas through the fact that quite recently (April, 1905) the remains of John Paul Jones, the hero of the occasion, were discovered in Paris, and are to be interred in the United States.

BURNING OF THE FRIGATE PHILADELPHIA

(In the Harbor of Tripoli, February 16, 1804)



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IX.

BURNING OF THE FRIGATE PHILADELPHIA.

*In the Harbor of Tripoli, February 16, 1804.**

This canvas represents one of the most daring feats ever performed in naval warfare, equalled only, perhaps, by the exploit of Lieutenant Hobson in sinking the collier "Merrimac" in the harbor of Santiago during the Spanish-American war of 1898. Lord Nelson characterized the burning of the "Philadelphia" as the most daring act of the age. The "Philadelphia" was the sister ship of the famous "Constitution," and under the command of Captain Bainbridge had been despatched to Tripoli to demand satisfaction for losses suffered by our merchant marine at the hands of Algerian pirates, who had been preying upon the commerce of the world for years. Arriving on the Algerian coast, she was led upon a reef by pirates whom she was chasing, her officers and crew were taken prisoners, her guns were thrown overboard, and she was taken into the harbor by her captors, and there remanned, regunned and made ready to defend the city against the other American ships which were blockading the port.

From his prison Captain Bainbridge managed to get into communication with the American fleet, and to sug-

* This is the only upright canvas of the series, being about five feet in height by about three and one-half feet in width.

gest the feasibility of destroying the "Philadelphia." Acting upon this suggestion Lieutenant Decatur undertook the perilous task. Decatur had sailed into the harbor of Tripoli in the frigate "United States" in the Preble expedition and captured a small Tripolitan vessel, which was renamed the "Intrepid." In her, with a crew of seventy-four brave volunteers, and accompanied by the "Siren," he sailed straight up to the "Philadelphia" in the evening, sprang on board with his men, and after a furious struggle and under the fire of the coast batteries, whose cannon swept the approach to the "Philadelphia," the Americans either killed or drove into the sea all the Tripolitans on board the "Philadelphia," which was set on fire, while the "Intrepid," with the assistance of the "Siren," escaped without the loss of a single man. It was a deed of marvellous bravery, so much so that on November 15, 1804, Thomas Jefferson sent a special message to Congress stating that Lieutenant Decatur had been advanced to be a Captain, and it is not surprising that so brave a seaman gradually rose to the rank of Commodore in the United States navy. He was the hero of many subsequent brilliant exploits, principally in foreign waters, and effectually showed the nations of Europe how to put an end to the piracy and insolence of the Barbary States, which had lasted for nearly three centuries. He was the recipient of many distinguished honors, and was presented with a sword by Congress for his share in the destruction of the "Philadelphia," and in 1812 with a gold medal for his capture of the British frigate "Macedonian" by his own ship the "United States." His patriotic devotion to his country is well exemplified in a toast which he proposed in 1816 on the occasion of a banquet which was tendered to him: "Our Country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be in the right; but our Country, right or wrong."

Decatur was born in Maryland on January 5, 1779, and died on March 22, 1820, in a duel with Commodore Barron.

Andrew Jackson, in his first annual message to Congress on December 8, 1829, referred to the heroic deed represented in this painting in the following language:

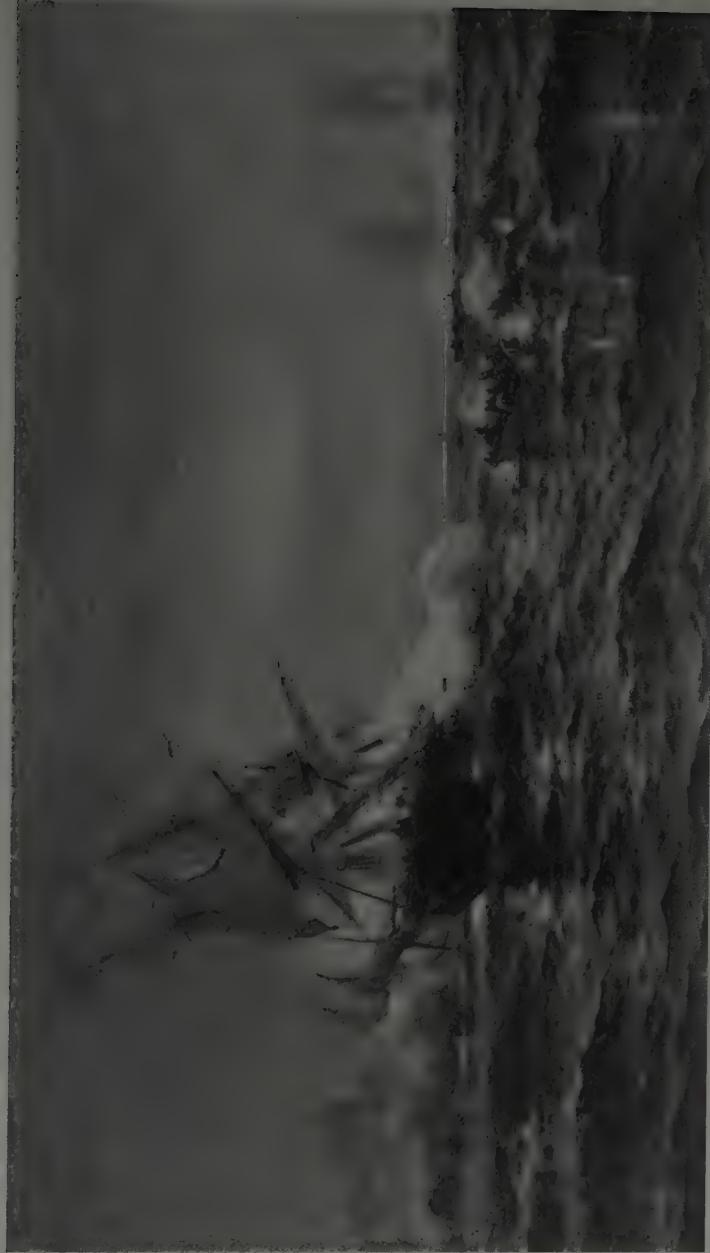
“ I cannot close this communication without bringing to your view the just claim of the representatives of Commodore Decatur, his officers and crew, arising from the recapture of the frigate ‘Philadelphia’ under the heavy batteries of Tripoli. Although sensible, as a general rule, of the impropriety of Executive interference under a Government like ours, where every individual enjoys the right of directly petitioning Congress, yet, viewing this case as one of very peculiar character, I deem it my duty to recommend it to your favorable consideration. Besides the justice of this claim, as corresponding to those which have been since recognized and satisfied, it is the fruit of a deed of patriotic and chivalrous daring which infused life and confidence into our infant navy and contributed as much as any exploit in its history to elevate our national character. Public gratitude, therefore, stamps her seal upon it, and the meed should not be withheld which may hereafter operate as a stimulus to our gallant tars.”

The burning of the “Philadelphia” is one of the most striking pictures in the series. The effect of the mounting flames against the moonless and midnight sky is impressive and spectacular, and their lurid reflection in the water, with a glimpse of the Algerian fort and batteries in the background to the right, and the little vessel of Decatur, fittingly named the “Intrepid,” skimming along the water away from the burning ship, with swelling sail and powerful stroke of oar, with the dense masses

of smoke rising to the extreme height of the painting and a shower of burning embers descending into the water—produce an effect, so vivid and realistic, of a great conflagration, that the eye is riveted to the scene with never-failing interest.

THE BRIG ARMSTRONG ENGAGING THE BRITISH FLEET

(In the Harbor of Fayal, September 26, 1814)



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X.

THE BRIG ARMSTRONG ENGAGING THE BRITISH FLEET.

*In the Harbor of Fayal, September 26, 1814.**

It is difficult to discriminate, in awarding the meed of praise for bravery, amid the many heroic deeds of the American navy. For fighting qualities and success in repulsing overwhelming numbers the exploit of Captain Samuel Chester Reid, in his battle with the British seamen which this picture illustrates, has never been surpassed. It was on the 26th of September, 1814, that the privateer, the brig "Armstrong," which had been fitted out in New York, cast anchor in the harbor of Fayal, one of the Azores, belonging to the neutral government of Portugal. About the same time three British ships, the "Plantagenet," the "Carnation" and the "Rota," under the command of Commodore Lloyd, appeared in the same harbor, and without further ceremony sent out four boat loads of men towards the brig "Armstrong," evidently with hostile intention. Captain Reid, realizing the futility of relying upon the protection of the impotent Portuguese authorities, prepared for the worst, and, on receiving a threatening response to a challenge which he addressed to the approaching boats, he unhesitatingly opened fire. As his crew consisted of only ninety men, his armament of eight nine-pounders, with only the famous "Long Tom," a twenty-four pounder (which was

* About five and one-half feet long by about three feet high.

exhibited at the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893) as a gun of any consequence to rely upon, while the enemy numbered over two thousand men and had a combined armament of one hundred and thirty-six guns, the hardihood of this initial proceeding will be apparent. After having suffered some loss in killed and wounded, three of the enemy's boats beat a hasty retreat, the fourth having been sunk, but about midnight the attack was renewed by fourteen boats, loaded to the guards with at least four hundred men. Captain Reid with his men fought like tigers, and "Long Tom," under the command of William Copeland, mowed down the enemy without giving them a chance to carry out their evident intention of capturing the ship. The battle lasted only forty minutes, but during this time two boats of the enemy had been captured and two sunk, and nearly three hundred of their men either killed or wounded, while Reid achieved a complete victory with the loss of only two men killed and seven wounded. A third attack was made by the enemy soon after daybreak, this time directly with the guns of the brig "Carnation," but "Long Tom," with its twenty-four pound shots, did so much damage to the hull of the enemy's ship that she was forced to withdraw, thus leaving the victory for the third time with Captain Reid. Having so far succeeded in warding off the enemy, Captain Reid thereupon, however, realizing the futility of continuing to fight against such odds, left the brig, after having scuttled and set her on fire, and reached the shore in safety. There the inhabitants of the town did all in their power to care for the wounded and protect the brave little band, who had barricaded themselves in a small stone church; and a demand made by the British commander for their surrender, on the ground that there were deserters among them, proved futile, as the charge could not be established.

Subsequently the Portuguese Government raised

"Long Tom," the historic gun of the "Armstrong," and presented it to the United States Government, and in January, 1887, Samuel C. Reid, the son and namesake of the valiant Captain, offered through President Cleveland to the United States the battle sword of his father—thus preserving these two invaluable relics as mementos of one of the most remarkable sea-fights in history.

Years later, Louis Napoleon, then Emperor of France, undertook to arbitrate the claims of the United States Government against the British Government for the loss of the "Armstrong," but decided in favor of the British on the ground that Captain Reid had opened fire on the British ships and thereby had failed to respect the neutrality of the port and must abide the result of his commencing hostilities.

The owners of the "Armstrong" made repeated efforts to obtain redress for the loss of their ship, but it was not until the year 1897 (about the time that Mr. Moran finished this painting) that some money was received, and, strange to say, paid over to the widow of the owner, Mr. Havens, the old lady then being ninety-eight years of age.

It may be interesting to recall that it was Captain Reid who, about the year 1817, designed the present flag of the United States, which for a time had been altered to fifteen stripes to designate the number of States to which the country had increased. On the suggestion of Captain Reid the number was again reduced to thirteen, and the addition of the States designated by the number of stars in the blue field. This was adopted by Act of Congress on April 4, 1818, and the first flag that was flung to the breeze, under the new law, was made by Mrs. Reid, the wife of the gallant Captain, the stars in the blue field being arranged at that time in the shape of a constellation constituting one great star.

Besides the glory which Captain Reid achieved through his wonderful exploit at Fayal—all the more wonderful

if it is remembered that he and his men were volunteer seamen, untrained in the regular navy of the United States —he had rendered his country a service far greater even than this feat of arms. It so happened that the ships of Commodore Lloyd were bound for the Gulf of Mexico to assist in the attack upon New Orleans; but by reason of the injury and demoralization inflicted on them by Captain Reid they were delayed long enough to prevent their co-operating with the British General, Sir Edward Packenham, in an earlier attack upon New Orleans, as originally contemplated, when General Jackson was not prepared to meet and defeat the enemy; the consequence of which might have been the loss to the United States of the entire Province of Louisiana, which had only a decade before been acquired from France.

Captain Reid was born at Norwich, Connecticut, on August 25, 1783, and died at the venerable age of seventy-eight at New York on January 28, 1861, on the very eve of our great Civil War, having enjoyed many honors, among them an appointment as Warden of the Port of New York.

Not only on account of the extraordinary character of the fight itself, but also on account of its indirect consequences, in assisting to bring the War of 1812 to a close, is this painting of the greatest interest. It measures full up to the excellence of the other numbers of the series, notwithstanding the immediate subject was not one which presented the most graphic material for the brush of the painter. Mr. Moran chose the most thrilling incident of the fight in depicting the firing of the brig on the approaching row-boats of the enemy. This he has accomplished with consummate skill. He has herein, as in all his other battle scenes on the water, avoided the portrayal of carnage and destruction of human life in lurid colors as is the custom with most painters. He has left these abhorrent scenes to the imagination, and has thereby

rendered his pictures, while suggesting all the dreadful accompaniments of warfare, chaste, and free from scenes which are revolting to the feelings.

The picture is perfect in itself, in its representation of the position of the "Armstrong," swayed, as it evidently is, through the powerful blasts from its own twenty-four pounder—the fire of the rifles from the men in the British row-boats—the buildings on the shore in the background on the left, with the suggestion of the hills on which the town is built and the British ships in the offing on the right—with the rising moon in the distance—and the shores of Fayal dimly defined upon the horizon, extending, as they do in fact, with their two widening arms around the harbor.

IRON VERSUS WOOD

Sinking of the Cumberland by the
Merrimac

(In Hampton Roads, March 8, 1862)



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XI.

IRON VERSUS WOOD—SINKING OF THE CUMBERLAND BY
THE MERRIMAC.

*In Hampton Roads, March 8, 1862.**

The title of this picture suggests not only the unequal character of the fight which the wooden ship "Cumberland" fought against the iron-clad "Merrimac," the first iron-clad that ever sailed in American waters, but also recalls to mind the contrast between the steel-armored battleships of the navies of the world of to-day and the wooden hulks which prevailed up to that time. It is a long span of time from the battle of brave Captain Reid in the harbor of Fayal in 1814 to the year 1861, but during that half century little progress had been made in supplying the ships of our navy with protecting devices, as there had likewise been little occasion for naval warfare. In fact, outside of the Mexican War and fights with the Indians, the country was at peace with itself as well as with the outside world, and it was not until the great struggle for the preservation of the Union called the whole country to arms, both on sea and land, that the opportunity was again presented for the shedding of additional lustre on our naval history.

The most thrilling and startling of all the events on the sea, during this sanguinary conflict, followed when, at noon on March 8, 1862, a novel craft, such as had

* About four and one-quarter feet long by about three feet high.

never been seen before, was cut loose from her moorings in Norfolk, and, after having steamed down the Elizabeth River, was seen to head boldly for Newport News, where lay the United States frigate "Congress" of fifty guns, under the command of Lieutenant Joseph B. Smith, and the twenty-four gun sloop of war "Cumberland," in charge of Lieutenant George U. Morris during the temporary absence of its commander, William Radford, two of the fleet of national ships, all riding at anchor in fancied security, without a thought of the death and destruction which the appearance of the stranger portended. It was an odd-looking craft—the "Merrimac," as it is generally called—more like a house afloat than a war ship, and the officers of the Federal ships were at first inclined to belittle its importance. The undertaking of the "Merrimac" itself (or "Virginia," as she was called by the Confederates) was one of great courage, the vessel in its last stages having but just been converted into an iron-clad, in great haste, out of the hulk of a sunken old style man-of-war (the "Merrimac"), which had been raised by the Confederates. The experiment was a new one; the men had not been drilled; its armament had never been tested, and its commander, Commodore Buchanan, had only recently arisen from a sick-bed. He had been a Union officer in the regular navy, and as such had placed the entire naval service under great obligations in being the first to have located the Naval Academy at Annapolis under a commission from the Secretary of the Navy. When it was realized by the commanders of the American ships that the "Merrimac" was steaming towards them in dead earnest there was hurried preparation for the impending conflict, and as she approached the "Cumberland" and the "Congress" they opened fire on the huge craft, but their heavy projectiles glanced from her as if they were paper balls. About 2:30 P.M. the "Merrimac," then within easy

range, opened fire on the "Cumberland," doing much damage. The two Federal ships, which were only about one hundred feet away, then gave the "Merrimac" full broadsides, but without the slightest effect, and the latter craft mercilessly sent four shells crashing into the "Congress," notwithstanding that Commodore Buchanan had a brother, McKean Buchanan, paymaster on the "Congress"—a harrowing illustration of the horrifying encounters among the closest kindred in civil warfare. After disabling the "Congress," the "Merrimac" directed her attention to the "Cumberland," and under a full head of steam her iron prow or ram, which projected four feet, struck the Federal ship "nearly at right angles under the fore rigging in the starboard fore channels." I quote further from Maclay's "History of the Navy": "The shock was scarcely felt in the iron-clad, but in the 'Cumberland' it was terrific. The ship heeled over to port and trembled as if she had struck a rock under full sail, while the iron prow of the 'Merrimac' crushed through her side and left a yawning chasm. In backing out of the 'Cumberland,' the 'Merrimac' left her iron prow inside the doomed ship. Following up the blow by the discharge of her bow gun, she backed clear of the wreck. In response to a demand for surrender, Lieutenant Morris defiantly answered, 'Never! I'll sink alongside.' * * * * The scene in the 'Cumberland' soon became awful. One shell, bursting in the sick bay, killed or wounded four men in their cots. More than a hundred of the crew very soon were killed or wounded; the cockpit was crowded; the decks were slippery with blood and were strewn with the dead and dying, while the inrushing waters and the rapid settling of the ship too plainly indicated that she would soon go to the bottom. In order to prevent the helpless wounded on the berth deck from being drowned, they were lifted up on racks and mess

chests, and as the ship settled more and more they were removed from this temporary refuge and carried on deck and placed amidship. This was all that their shipmates could do for them, and when the ship finally went down they perished in her."

After sinking the "Cumberland," the "Merrimac" again turned on the "Congress" with her entire broadside and, owing to her own impervious character, soon got the Federal ship into such condition, notwithstanding the heroic defence of her men under Lieutenant Smith, who soon was killed, that she had to surrender, and thereafter caught fire from the hot shot of the enemy and was destroyed. The "Merrimac," now under the command of Lieutenant Jones, a rifle ball having struck both Commodore Buchanan and Flag-Lieutenant Minor, not yet satisfied with the destruction which she had wrought, then turned her attention to the remaining Federal ships, the "Minnesota," "St. Lawrence" and "Roanoke," and after having, with the assistance of some accompanying Confederate gun-boats, played havoc especially with the "Minnesota," about seven o'clock in the evening, owing to the ebbing tide, turned her head towards Sewell's Point, where she anchored for the night, with the intention of renewing her dread work on the following morning, after one of the most disastrous days in the history of the Federal navy.

In selecting the destruction of the "Cumberland" by the "Merrimac" as the subject of this painting, the artist showed his usual good judgment. It was one of the earliest as well as most startling incidents of the entire war, and in its effect in revolutionizing the construction not only of our ships, but those of the world, easily holds first place in all naval history. The picture is wonderfully painted and dramatically handled and is considered by some critics the most interesting of the series.

The huge, truncated bulk of the Confederate ram is

shown in the act of plunging her prow through the wooden hull of her opponent in the teeth of a broadside of fire and shell. The contrast of colors and values is forcibly expressed; the black soft coal smoke from the single stack of the "Merrimac" drifts forward and envelopes her antagonist as the cuttle-fish darkens the water that it may more easily destroy its victim.

An examination of this painting is its best description. It is almost impossible to paint in words the scene which the great artist has here perpetuated with his brush. The water is incomparable and the effect of the shipping as a background, the bright afternoon sun, with the stars and stripes on the "Cumberland," and the stars and bars, the emblem of the Confederacy, on the stern of the death-dealing Southern monster, the crowded deck of the "Cumberland," in contrast with the apparently unmanned craft of the enemy, all add to the thrilling and vivid effect of the extraordinary combat itself.

When the news of the destruction wrought by the "Merrimac" reached the North the general consternation was indescribable. At a hastily called Cabinet meeting the then Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, is reported to have said: "The 'Merrimac' will change the whole character of the war; she will destroy every naval vessel; she will lay all seaboard cities under contribution; not unlikely we may have a shell or cannon ball from one of her guns in the White House before we leave this room." But the fate of the "Merrimac" was sealed, for while she was being moulded out of the old Federal hulk into the terrifying ram, with great ingenuity, by Constructor John L. Porter, with the assistance of Chief Engineer William P. Williamson, after some rough drawings prepared by Lieutenant John N. Brook, who originated the idea of her construction, all then of the Confederate navy—through a strange coincidence a genius had been at work in the North perfecting the

world-renowned little "Monitor," which was soon to meet the formidable Southern iron-clad in battle, the history of which is suggested by the next painting of the series. It is also strange that in two of the most noted dramas in the records of our navy, the one above recounted, and that, already referred to, in which Lieutenant Hobson later bore so heroic a part, the most conspicuous objects were vessels which were both known as the "Merrimac." The valor of Lieutenant Morris, in the part which he bore in the defence of the "Cumberland," has been immortalized not only through this canvas, but also through a special message of Abraham Lincoln to Congress under date of December 10, 1862, as follows:

"In conformity to the law of July 16, 1862, I most cordially recommend that Lieutenant-Commander George U. Morris, United States Navy, receive a vote of thanks of Congress for the determined valor and heroism displayed in his defence of the United States ship-of-war 'Cumberland,' temporarily under his command, in the naval engagement at Hampton Roads on the 8th March, 1862, with the rebel iron-clad steam frigate 'Merrimac.'"

THE WHITE SQUADRON'S
FAREWELL SALUTE

To the Body of
CAPTAIN JOHN ERICSSON

(New York Bay, August 25, 1890)



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XII.

THE WHITE SQUADRON'S FAREWELL SALUTE TO THE BODY OF CAPTAIN JOHN ERICSSON.

*New York Bay, August 25, 1890.**

No more fitting funeral cortège could have been devised than the one which, on August 25, 1890, conveyed to Sweden, to their last resting-place, the remains of the great engineer, John Ericsson, whose inventive genius had clad the wooden navies of the world in armor of impenetrable iron and steel. Little had he dreamt when, in 1839, at the age of thirty-six (he was born at Värmland, Sweden, on July 31, 1803) he came to the United States in one of the old wooden ships of that day after a weary journey of many weeks—as yet comparatively unknown to fame—that at the time of his death, on March 8, 1889, in the city of New York, almost twenty-seven years to a day after the epoch-making battle of his “Monitor” with the “Merrimac,” his name would be on every tongue in every land, and that the Government of the United States would deem it an honor to place the magnificent protected cruiser “Baltimore” of the United States Navy at the disposal of his native country on his farewell journey from our shores to his long home, amid the salutes, to their flag-ship, of the other giants of the White Squadron and the reverent tokens of grief and respect displayed on all the shipping in the harbor, as the

* About four and one-half feet long by about three feet high.

funeral convoy slowly plied her way towards the ocean, with the flags of Sweden and the United States waving at half mast over her decks.

It is this impressive panorama which the artist spreads before us in this canvas, which was the sensation of the Spring exhibition of 1891 at the National Academy of Design in New York. In this picture he has delineated details of the shipping from sketches made by himself at the time and a careful study of our war vessels, as holds likewise true of the next succeeding and last picture of this series. There is something impressively grand and solemn about this painting, associated as it is with the story of the great inventor. The sky is superb, and the water has that realistic motion without turbulence which only Edward Moran could depict, while the white gleaming sister ships of the "Baltimore" in the background on the right, the shipping in the harbor of all descriptions and sizes in more sombre hue on the left, and the Statue of Liberty looming up in the rear, stand like sentinels on guard as the great white cruiser, with its flags at half mast and its stacks sending forth, like a veil of mourning, a cloud of black smoke—ploughs with foam encircled prow majestically through the water, like a great living, breathing, moving thing.

As this creation of the artist perpetuates the tribute of national gratitude to the great inventor of the first "Monitor," so, it may be said, a fitting tribute has been paid to the picture itself through its reproduction in a superb etching by another great American artist, his own brother, Thomas Moran.

That the United States Navy should take so deep an interest in paying the last honors to John Ericsson, with an Admiral of the Navy, Daniel L. Braine, superintending the ceremonies, and a future Admiral, Winfield Scott Schley, commanding the funeral convoy, is not surprising, for to Ericsson it owed not only the bomb-proof

floating fortresses of the ocean, but the screw propeller, first applied in the construction of the United States man-of-war "Princeton," with propelling machinery under the water line out of the reach of shot. The first steam fire-engine ever constructed in the United States was also the work of Ericsson in 1841, and many and varied were the other inventions of his creative brain. But the greatest service rendered by Ericsson was in the construction of the "Monitor," not only on account of the immediate, almost inestimable benefit which it conferred in saving the United States Navy from destruction by the Confederate iron-clad "Merrimac," in 1862, but also, still more, in view of the impetus which it gave to the development of marine craft to their present perfection and in almost revolutionizing the entire science of naval warfare.

When, at 8 o'clock on March 9, 1862, the "Merrimac," after the havoc which she had wrought with the Federal ships on the evening before, including the burning of the "Congress" and the sinking of the "Cumberland," steamed out from the shore in order to continue her work of destruction—which contemplated successively the annihilation of the "Minnesota," the "Roanoke" and the "St. Lawrence," and would thus clear the way for her intended attack on the capital of the nation—she was surprised to discover a diminutive craft of peculiar construction, almost sunk beneath the water line, with a strange-looking iron turret in the centre, steaming boldly towards her from out the shadow of the powerful frigate "Minnesota." The "Monitor" had sailed from New York Harbor on March 6th, in tow of a tugboat, to brave the waters of the Atlantic, although she was originally designed only for smooth inland waters. Before she had passed Sandy Hook she received urgent despatches to hurry to Washington and, after inconceivable hardships in the towering seas of the Atlantic coast, arrived off Fortress Monroe about 9 o'clock in the evening of

March 8th, where she heard for the first time of the depredations of the "Merrimac" and witnessed the final destruction of the "Congress" amid lurid flames and the bursting of her own shells. Though worn out and disheartened in their own struggle for life with the tempestuous billows of the ocean on this, her first trial trip of thirty-six hours from New York until she reached the side of the "Minnesota," the crew of the "Monitor," encouraged and reassured by its heroic commander, Lieutenant John L. Worden, prepared for the expected combat with their redoubtable opponent.

The eyes not only of the men in the shipping and on shore, both Union and Confederate, but of the whole country, were anxiously centred on the two iron-clads as they approached each other, and the little "Monitor" hardly seemed a match for the huge craft of the Confederates, who looked with contempt upon the diminutive "cheese box," as they called it, which dared to take up the gage of battle with their formidable "Merrimac." Soon, however, it became apparent that the prowess of the little Union craft had been entirely underestimated, and in the combat which ensued the very smallness of the "Monitor" gave her a great advantage, in the swiftness of her movements, over her gigantic opponent, not unlike an undersized but agile and skilful athlete in encounter with a large and lumbering, though more powerful, antagonist. Lieutenant Worden was the hero of the occasion in the rapidity of his manœuvring, while Lieutenant Jones, now in command of the "Merrimac," was surprised to find that his shot made no impression on the "Monitor." After more than two hours of incessant fighting, Lieutenant Worden having been temporarily blinded through the powder from an exploding shell which struck a sight-hole in the pilot-house of the "Monitor," through which he was watching the enemy, its command devolved upon Lieutenant Greene. As in the

ensuing confusion the "Monitor" had drifted into shoal water, where the "Merrimac" could not follow, the latter ship retired to the shore, and although refitted and repaired for further combat she did not again meet the "Monitor" in battle, and, on the evacuation of Norfolk by the Confederates on the 10th of May following, they consigned her to destruction.

The courage of Lieutenant Worden in the handling of the novel and untested craft under his command, and his brave words—even when blinded and wounded by the powder and particles from the shells of the enemy and suffering intense pain—when he was told that the "Minnesota" had been saved: "Then I can die happy,"—stamp him as worthy of a place in the long list of our naval heroes.

It is not surprising that Abraham Lincoln, with his quick perception of genuine merit, caused the following communication to be sent to Lieutenant Worden:

"NAVY DEPARTMENT, *March 15, 1862.*

"Lieutenant *John L. Worden, United States Navy,*
Commanding United States Steamer 'Monitor,' Washington.

"Sir:

"The naval action which took place on the 10th * inst. between the 'Monitor' and 'Merrimac' at Hampton Roads, when your vessel, with two guns, engaged a powerful armored steamer of at least eight guns, and after a few hours' conflict repelled her formidable antagonist, has excited general admiration and received the applause of the whole country.

"The President directs me, while earnestly and deeply sympathizing with you in the injuries which you have sustained, but which it is believed are but temporary, to

* This, it would seem, ought to be March 9th.

thank you and your command for the heroism you have displayed and the great service you have rendered.

“The action of the 10th and the performance, power, and capabilities of the ‘Monitor’ must effect a radical change in naval warfare.

“Flag-Officer Goldsborough, in your absence, will be furnished by the Department with a copy of this letter of thanks and instructed to cause it to be read to the officers and crew of the ‘Monitor.’

“I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“GIDEON WELLES.”

The President followed this up with a special message to Congress on December 8, 1862, as follows:

“*To the Senate and House of Representatives:*

“In conformity to the law of July 16, 1862, I most cordially recommend that Commander John L. Worden, United States Navy, receive a vote of thanks of Congress for the eminent skill and gallantry exhibited by him in the late remarkable battle between the United States iron-clad steamer ‘Monitor,’ under his command, and the rebel iron-clad steamer ‘Merrimac,’ in March last.

“The thanks of Congress for his services on the occasion referred to were tendered by a resolution approved July 11, 1862, but the recommendation is now specially made in order to comply with the requirements of the ninth section of the act of July 16, 1862, which is in the following words, viz.:

“‘That any line officer of the Navy or Marine Corps may be advanced one grade if upon recommendation of the President by name he receives the thanks of Congress for highly distinguished conduct in conflict with the enemy or for extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession.’

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

In this fight the "Monitor" had been struck twenty-two times without appreciable effect, the deepest indentation having been made by a shot that penetrated the iron on her side to the depth of four inches. On the "Merrimac" ninety-seven indentations of shot were found, twenty of which were from the 11-inch guns of the "Monitor," which had shattered six of the top layers of her iron plates.

On the 29th of December following, the "Monitor" herself was lost, having been foundered and sunk with sixteen of her crew, in a heavy gale, a few miles south of Cape Hatteras. But the test to which the "Monitor" had been subjected in her battle with the "Merrimac" proved beyond doubt that iron was destined to take the place of wood in the construction of our men-of-war thereafter, and the confidence of John Ericsson in the ultimate success of his experiment, after many discouragements and rebuffs on the part of the naval authorities, was fully justified in its final results, and the honors which the nation showered upon him in the evening of his life, and the tribute which it paid to his genius after his death, were merited by him quite as much as the perpetuation of his memory through this stirring canvas of the great artist, as is also the memory, in the second painting of this series, of that other Erickson, his ancestor, who, almost a thousand years before, was the first white man known to have set foot on American soil.

RETURN OF THE CONQUERORS

Typifying Our Victory in the Late
Spanish-American War

(September 29, 1899)



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XIII.

RETURN OF THE CONQUERORS. TYPIFYING OUR VICTORY IN THE LATE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, SEPTEMBER 29, 1899.*

'As a fitting close to the grand pictorial illustration of our marine history, this canvas represents one of the most magnificent pageants ever seen on our waters, in commemoration of the victorious close of the last great war, in which our navy added fresh leaves to its laurel wreath of heroic achievement. It, at the same time, depicts the culminating stage in the evolution of naval construction from the time when the Norsemen in their drakkars, and Columbus in his caravels, braved the perils of the ocean, until the steel-clad battleships of Dewey and Schley and Sampson met in conflict the no less formidable floating fortresses of Cervera and Montojo. It is a picture of to-day, with the well-defined outlines of the Statue of Liberty in allegorical suggestion at the mouth of the great river up which the little "Half Moon" first sailed, also on a September day, just two hundred and ninety years before. It suggests—in the great, grim, steel-clad Leviathans of the ocean steaming up the river, with their powerful armament and each representing millions of dollars in its construction, along the shores of the second largest city in the world, and with flags and banners flying proudly from every mast and spar—not only the victory of our arms but the growth of the nation, from the sparse settlements in the days of the Pilgrim Fathers

* Four and one-half feet long by about three feet high.

to a population of 80,000,000 souls, and from the thirteen little struggling provinces, at the outbreak of the Revolution, to the forty-five great States and four Territories of the Union, with its possessions even beyond the confines of the continent—imperial in its power and greatness, not dreamt of even when, only about a century before, Paul Jones and Decatur and Captain Reid performed the feats of daring which are immortalized in the earlier of these paintings.

It typifies, as the artist himself points out in his title, our conquering arms—in the very motion of the proud battleships, as in majestic array, representing both the Pacific and North Atlantic squadrons, they seem to sweep gradually forward and onward within full view. If Mr. Moran had never painted anything else, this picture would stamp him as a surpassing genius. The grouping of the great vessels and the indication of their vast number, the brilliancy of the water and the whole coloring are matchless. It suggests in the proud procession of the ships-of-war, in perspective, as far back as the eye can reach, a gathering of almost the entire navy, and is in that respect far more than a mere photographic representation of the actual occurrence. In this picture he represents the “Olympia” as the principal object, the nearest in the foreground, her hull in gleaming white, with the suggestion of the figure of Admiral Dewey standing on the bridge, with her sister ships of like hue following in her wake; while another line, on the left of the picture, headed by the “New York” and “Brooklyn,” and with Admirals Sampson and Schley on board, appears in more sombre hue, only second in importance, however, to the “Olympia.” Such a picture could only be produced by an artist of the most poetic and imaginative instincts as well as a close student of the actualities; for while it is to a certain extent allegoric of the event which it records and the memories connected with it, nothing could be

more real or faithful than the reproduction of our iron-clads, with all the detail of armament, turret, tackle, anchor, port-holes and even the national coat of arms on the prow. Even the signal of the "Olympia," "Remember the Maine," and the answering signal of the "Brooklyn," "The Maine is avenged and Cuba is free," can be seen flying from their yards.

The events which are recalled by this painting are so recent that it would seem superfluous to refer to them at all, and yet, in continuation of the historic outline presented in these pages, it may be of interest to record that the battle of Manila was fought on May 1, 1898; that not a single life was lost on the American side and only a few men wounded, without any material injury to the American ships, consisting of four cruisers and two gun-boats, while the whole Spanish fleet, under the command of Admiral Montojo, consisting of seven cruisers and five gunboats, was destroyed, with the exception of two, and these were captured, and that our ships, in addition, silenced and captured the formidable shore batteries on Cavite Point. Furthermore, that our naval operations came to a close off Santiago Harbor on July 3, 1898, through the destruction or capture by our fleet—under the command of Admirals Schley and Sampson, consisting of four battleships, one armored cruiser and two converted yachts, one of them the "Gloucester," under the command of the intrepid Richard Wainwright—of the entire Spanish fleet, consisting of four powerful armored cruisers of the highest class and two torpedo boat destroyers, under the command of Admiral Cervera.

Space forbids even a passing reference to the instances of individual heroism displayed during this war by the officers and men of our ships, as for example that of Lieutenant Richmond P. Hobson, all of which are conjured up by a contemplation of this painting. It is also impossible to refer at length to the reception itself to

Admiral Dewey and the other officers and men of our fleets, of which the naval procession constituted only one feature; but no eye-witness can ever forget the march of the returning victors in the land parade on September 30, 1899, as it passed under that masterpiece of American sculpture, the arch located at Madison Square.

There were also some touching incidents connected with this celebration. Among them, and as suggested by this picture, should be mentioned the fact that a sailor by the name of Bartholomew Diggins presented Admiral Dewey with the blue flag of Admiral Farragut, which had been in the possession of Diggins, who had served with Dewey under Farragut in the Civil War, and this flag flew from one of the mast-heads of the "Olympia" as she steamed up the river in the van of the magnificent array.

How doubly glorious will appear this splendid ovation to our heroes immortalized in this picture, if the war, from which they are shown returning as conquerors, shall result in a full realization of the noble motive, which inspired it, of liberation and not of conquest, and we may in patriotic pride address Columbia in the words of Timothy Dwight:

"To conquest and slaughter let Europe aspire;
Whelm nations in blood, and wrap cities in fire;
Thy heroes the rights of mankind shall defend,
And triumph pursue them, and glory attend!"

With this picture the artist closes the commemoration of our naval achievements in the four great periods of our history, the War of the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War of 1898, to which the last six pictures of the series are devoted, as the preceding six illustrate the dawn of our history

from the first landing of the white man to the settlement of the Pilgrim Fathers—preceding all of which is the mysterious and unfathomable past symbolized by the trackless “Ocean,” the first of these paintings.

From the time that Eirek the Red sailed to the bleak shores of Greenland down to the brilliant exploit of Admiral Dewey in the Philippine Islands, how true it is, in view of each and every one of the events immortalized in this unequalled series of paintings, that, in the words of Bishop Berkeley,

“ Westward the course of empire takes its way ! ”



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